

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board Meeting

May 8, 2014

Conference Room, 2A02, Cathcart Way Operations Center

Meeting called to order at 10:30 by Chairman John Tellesbo

Board Members Present

John Tellesbo
Ed Stocker
Dick Barr
Cult Moulton

Others Present

Sonny Gohrman - Snohomish County Noxious Weed Coordinator
Geraldine Saw - Snohomish County Lead Noxious Weed Inspector/Technician
Al Smith - District II Supervisor
Don Tillman – Weed Board Applicant District 2

Introductions

Introductions were made around the table to welcome Don Tillman who is applying for the position representing District 2.

Approval of minutes from April, 2014

Ed made the motion to approve the April minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Dick. Motion passed

Old Business

Board Members for District 3

The District 3 position is still open. Ed will contact Reed Carlton to find out if he would be interested.

Action: Ed will contact Reed Carlton regarding District 3 position.

PDS work with Weed Board on enforcement issues (update)

John reported that there is no new update. Emails have been exchanged for a couple of weeks. Some meeting dates were suggested. The attorneys and managers have to find a date where everyone could meet and talk.

Preliminary planning for the 2015 budget.

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Sonny reported that the 2015 preliminary budget is similar to the 2014 budget with some updated numbers. He referred to the paragraph explaining the tansy owners contact which was highlighted in yellow. The paragraph needs to be revised with new information gathered this season. Sonny referred to the budget table. This year, there is a \$37,000 increase in the general fund coming from RM and SWM. \$30,000 was provided by SWM which will be spent in the general fund, knotweed and other projects. This will be split between the upland budget and the knotweed projects. The mitigation project request has the same budget to maintain fewer mitigation sites. We are the recipient of \$60,000 from the NEP Skykomish River grant which was written to by SWM. The grant will fund a helicopter video survey and data analysis of knotweed in the Skykomish River. The survey will determine the extent and volume of knotweed along the Skykomish River.

Sonny highlighted some numbers colored in red in the 2015 budget spreadsheet. The red numbers are grant dependent. We won't have any grant figures or the opportunity to apply for funding until the legislature decides on the 2015-2017 budget. The knotweed grant and Spartina contract from WSDA end June 30, 2015 and the Stillaguamish SRFB grant ends the end of this year. We don't have any new grants written for next year. We will have the county funds for the first six months and may have to trim back on hiring.

Sonny mentioned that he had been contacted by FEMA about noxious weed concerns in the Oso slide area. Curt asked if there we can explore funds for the Oso recovery. Funds for temporary workers are available through Work Force Snohomish for employment in the slide area. Curt suggested going through Steve Thompson to check the status of the emergency funding.

Action: Action: Sonny to follow-up on the Work Force Snohomish funding and check on FEMA funding.

Sonny mentioned that he was requested to draft up a Plan B budget, which there is none except what we've done in the past with limited funding. Don asked if there are other ways to manage weeds. Sonny and John explained that we try to prioritize the weeds and getting them before they get worse. Don asked about owners who want to be left alone. He was approached by a property owner who received a knotweed letter and was unsure what to tell the owner. Sonny responded that even though there is a weed law, we haven't used it yet. In the Stillaguamish River, we have not pressured or enforced on anyone. John added that he had to send letters in the past and the letters are not intended to pick on one person. The letters are generic and are meant to inform and get the owners attention. Sonny said that the owners are welcome to come to the meeting or contact us. Don asked why knotweed is bad. Sonny explained the knotweed effects on salmon.

Dick moved to approve the 2015 budget proposal. The motion was seconded by Ed.

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Coordinators Report

Sonny said that there are 3 seasonals working for us currently. One more will start in June 1st. The first three were returning from last year and the 4th was in the WCC crew last year. King County does a training next week which the seasonals will attend. One spot is still open and is available to anyone who wishes to attend.

The WCC crews have been cut to one crew with the potential of a spike crews for two 10 day periods. We would have a total of 18 WCC crew members for 10 days, 12 for 10 more days and 6 from July 7 to September 10. The crews will work in Spartina and knotweed.

Two staff members are tasked to check on the tansy properties so that the tansy list is updated. Letters can be sent out again next year once the list is updated. Another visit will be made in August. 12 poison hemlock owners were contacted. The poison hemlock in Stanwood was sprayed. Currently, 7.3 road miles was recorded based on 24 spray records. 18 more reports have not been recorded and mapped. There will be less mitigation sites this year and some of the sites are bio control only. There may be some left over mitigation funding. Dick asked about the biocontrol release for knotweed in the Skykomish. Sonny said that the biocontrol knotweed program has to go through one final approval process before they can be released. Everyone is hopeful about a release this season.

We are going to do some work for the City of Lake Stevens to spray some landscaping beds along Lundeen Parkway and the approaches to the two roundabouts. John asked if the work is related to noxious weeds control. Sonny responded that no noxious weeds will be controlled and no profit can be made. We have been trying to do work with some cities and this project allows the crew to use other budget categories. A discussion on the budget ensued. John advised that noxious weeds should take priority and be controlled first before focusing on other weeds.

Sonny presented at the NW all Breed Goat Club in Burlington. About 12 people attended 6 from Snohomish County. He gave a talk to 23 Beach Watchers in Edmonds with a field trip to the Edmonds Marsh. One of the attendees was the gentleman that spotted Spartina from the Sounder Train a couple of years ago. Sonny gave his first presentation through a webinar to 22 WSU foresters who logged in over the internet. We are all working in ArcGIS10 now. Lynn Bridges is proving to be a great resource. John asked if we are sharing a booth in the Evergreen State Fair. Sonny said that we will split the booth with the Snohomish Conservation District. Other educational booths will be set up at the Sorticulture event in Everett and the Festival of the River. Sonny was not asked to talk to in the Master Gardener class this year and he looking at other avenues to expand the talks he does.

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New Business/Other Business

2 people that died and 2 people are still missing after the Oso slide that were among the property owners / cooperators that have worked with us on the knotweed control project in the Stillaguamish. Staff will proceed with sensitivity working with owners in the affected areas.

Sonny mentioned that the next meeting is scheduled for July 10th. Sonny invited board members to visit the office to learn what we have done. Tour dates are also available for Spartina. John asked Sonny to set up a date for him to look at weeds and sites in July.

Action: Sonny set a date with John for project and weed tour.

Ed moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Dick. Passed

Meeting adjourned at 11:45

Respectfully submitted by Geraldine Saw and Sonny Gohrman.

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